

MERCATOR:

Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the British Trade, &c.

From Tuesday, June 1. to Thursday, June 13. 1714.

The contradictory Discourse of our Opposers.

Any thing that drives away our People, ruins our Commerce.

But if the Dissenters should flee abroad, they will hardly flee into France.

Now it seems they are afraid of the Dutch.

The Dutch were once the only Manufacturers.

How did they lose it?

Our keeping the Wooll at home brought the Manufacture hither.

If we keep the Wooll, we can never lose the Manufacture.

Persecute who we will, if we do not persecute the Wooll, all the World cannot carry away our Manufactures.

IT is the merriest thing that these Trade-Mountebanks could ever have put upon the World to be talking a Twelve-month to the People, that they should not Trade with a certain Country, who would take our Manufactures off if we would let them, and then tell us at home that Persecution will cause our Manufacturers to flye out of the Nation; and that if they do, they will carry our Trade with them, and teach our Neighbours to make our Goods as well as we can our selves.

Nothing of the kind was ever so stupid as these People would make the Nation to be, who knows not that any thing which drives our People from home ruins our Commerce and weakens the Nation.

But this will make a new Discovery in Trade which we have not heard of from these Men before, viz. that there is Danger of the Dutch as well as of the French falling into our Manufactures.

The Mercator presumes, that if the Dissenters are persecuted, for those are the People they mean, they will hardly flee into France for Refuge, and so teach the French how to make our Woollen-Manufactures; On the other Hand, if we may believe them the French need no Teaching, for they have often told us they have Spinners and Weavers as good as we, and make their Goods as good as we can do, tho' by the way there's not one Word of it true.

Now it seems, if the Dissenters are persecuted, they will flee into Holland and teach the Dutch how to make our Manufactures! stupid

senseless Generation! How long shall willful Blindness reign among us?

Whence had the English the Skill of working in Wooll? Did we not learn it from the Dutch? How came they when they were Masters of it, and we knew nothing of it? How came they to lose it to us? Was it not because we withheld our Wooll from them, and they could not work without Woolf? Now if they could not keep the Trade when they had the Skill of Workmanship and we had not, only because they had not the Wooll; and if we got the Trade from them and the Skill of Workmanship too, only because we had the Wooll and they had not: How then shall they recover the Trade from us, when they have neither the Skill in Workmanship or the Wooll, and we have both?

The Mercator is as far from wishing the Persecution of Dissenters as any in Britain can be, and believes they had never been in any danger of it, if these furious Men and their Measures had not both betray'd them to it, and abandon'd them in it, which is very little to the present Purpose, but that these People want something to talk of; for what is Persecution of Dissenters to the present Affair of Trade? If we do not persecute the Sheep, and cause them to flye abroad with the Wooll on their Backs. There is no possibility of our Neighbours gaining our Manufactures away.

It is the Wooll is the Matter; if the Wooll be kept at home, there's no danger of the Trade; all the Artists, all the Workmen in the Wold cannot make the Manufactures without the Wooll.

The

The Dutch had once all the Workmen, all the Spinners, all the Weavers, not a piece of Goods was made in England ; Two Millions a Year went hence to buy Cloths ; our Lead, Tin, Coal, Corn, Cattle, and Wooll, all went abroad to purchase Woollen Manufactures ; Why did they not keep it ? The Reason was only this one, they wanted nothing but the Wooll, and we had nothing towards it but the Wooll ; and that one Article turn'd the whole Scale of the Trade ; we stopp'd the Wooll and kept it at home, and all the Manufacturers run hither after it, and they will never run away from it while the Wooll remains here.

In a word, England has nothing to do but to keep her Wooll at home ; and if all the Manufacturers in the Nation runs away, they could not carry away the Manufacture with them, nor set it up in any foreign Country.

It is true, we have the Skill, and the Spinning, and the best Workmen in the World. But woe be to England, when our Neighbours want nothing but Workmen and Skill to take our Manufactures from us ; it is true, it is not done presently, it must be the Work of time. But why have not the French and the Dutch also obtained this Skill in a Hundred Year or more ? It is evident, they have a skill in proportion to their Quantity of Wooll which they have to Employ, and to the Quality too, *take that with you as you go.* They do make as good Goods as the Wooll they have will permit them to make ; and the more of our Wooll they get, they better Goods they make, and the more that Skill Increases ; all which are strong Motives to us to consider of some more effectual Methods to prevent the Exportation of our Wooll.

But as to the Exportation of our Workmen, keep but the Wooll behind, and let them go, if they are so willing to Injure their Country, as to do their endeavour to erect Manufactures abroad, let them do their worst with the best foreign Wooll they can get. The very Nations that employ them will send hither for their Goods, and England shall see their Malice and laugh at their Folly.

It is all Canting and Tautology to say the French have Wooll, and the Dutch have Wooll ; it is Bantering your Country and Bantering it with a Lye, a meer downright Forgery. The French have Wooll and no Wooll ; they have nothing of Wooll in fineness, nor nothing of Quantity ; nothing compared to the setting up a National Manufacture, and doing all those great things in Trade as we have most Impudently been told they do.

To say they have Wooll may be literally true,

but when we are speaking of Trade, and of getting our Trade from us, we may truly say they have no Wooll, that is, none that can enable them to erect a Manufacture so as to set up against us. If they have, pray what is the Reason that we have not had them meddle any thing considerably in Manufactures till within these last forty Years ? Why did they not get into the Woolen Trade 150 Year ago ? And why not as well improv'd in it then as now ?

Is not the Reason plain ; Is it not because they had not the Wooll, nor had they gotten into the Method of obtaining Wooll from England as they have done since, and as they have done of late to a most prodigious Quantity ?

And here it may be well worth observing, that the Skill which the French have had, and the Improvement which they have made in Woollen Manufactures, have risen and increased as the Opportunities they have had to get great Quantities of Wooll has increased. The Reason is plain, and the thing carries the Reason along with it, (viz.) That without our Wooll they could do nothing ; and if they continue to get our Wooll, they will go on to Improve more and more, and if they had all our Wooll they would have all our Trade ; as certainly, as that if we can keep our Wooll at home, neither they, nor any People in the World, can wrong us in the Woollen Manufacture.

So that whatever of our People go abroad, tho' the *Mercator* is very sorry if such times are at hand, that People shall fly for Religion ; but if that time should come, they may fly to what Country they please, they will never do us any Injury in our Woollen Manufactures if they leave but our Wooll behind them ; if they can carry our Wooll away, indeed much may be done.

There remains a Consideration which the *Mercator* never yet spoke to, (viz.) Why have not our Neighbours had Sheep from us so to have had a Growth of Wooll of their own as good as ours, and of the same kind, seeing it is full as easie to carry over our Sheep as our Wooll ? And no Question it is done, nay, the *Mercator* knows it is done, and grants it, and yet those Nations have not our Wooll either in kind or in quantity for all that, neither in Holland or in France ; of which the next *Mercator* shall speak more fully.

In a few Days will be Published,

*** The Second and Third Volumes of the EXAMINER, printed in a neat Pocket Edition, on an Elzevir Letter, and on good Paper.

LONDON : Printed for BENJ. TOOKE, at the Temple-Gate, and JOHN BARBER, on Lambeth-Hill. (Price 3 Half-pence.)